

[19 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Misunderstanding about India's Missile Programme

3657. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Pakistan readies 3000 KM Ghaury III to counter Agni" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 22nd January, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the International community has charged India for having started an unnecessary arms race in the region by test firing Agni II and if so, the steps taken by Government to nullify the misunderstanding in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government has already decided to induct the Agni-II system based on our security needs.

(c) India's programme is a purely defensive response to regional developments affecting our security.

Tunnel near Indo-Pak Border

†3658. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a tunnel has been found recently in a field near the Indo-Pak border;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.